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## OUR OLD DRESSMAKER.

'This will never do, my dear,' said my aunt ruefully, as she pondered over a long account just come in, being the sum expended in the making of my first 'evening dress.' 'Sixteen shillings! in addition to the materials! These London dressmakers are ruinous. We must find some one to work in the house, as did Lydia Jones.' And my poor aunt, newly imported from the country, sighed while she fastened my pretty dress—called frock now no more; for it marked my passing into the charmed regions of young ladyhood. I loved it, the pretty pale silk, of simple yet graceful fashion, which did duty as a 'best dress' for more time than richer maidens would care to confess. The poor old thing! I found a fragment of it the other day, and sighed, remembering the scenes where it had been, and the girlish bosom which beneath its folds had learned to throb with deeper pulses than those of pleasure at a new silk dress.

My aunt's lamentations that night brought forth their fruits. 'Letty,' said she on our next linen-drapery investment, 'I have found a dressmaker, to work as Lydia did, for eighteenpence a day. You can help her, my dear, as you used to help Lydia. Women can never learn too much regarding the use of their fingers.'

I acquiesced, for I had a fancy, indeed quite a genius, that way, I believe; only I always wished to make the dresses on artistic rather than fashionable principles, and I began to fear the London workwoman would not coincide with my vagaries so readily as quiet Lydia in the country. So I rather dreaded the advent of the new dressmaker.

'Who is she, and when does she come, aunt?'

'Her name is Miss Hilton, and she comes to-morrow. Now, my dear, go to your practising.'

I did go—but, with the curiosity of fifteen, I did not cease to speculate on the young workwoman. In fact I confess to having bestirred my lazy self half an hour earlier on the following morning, in honour of her coming, which, in our quiet life, was quite an event.

It was, I remember, one of the wettest of all wet September days. Still, at half-past eight A.M., there faithfully appeared 'our dressmaker.' Little cause had I to be alarmed at her—a poor, pale thing, who, when she had taken off her damp shawl—I recollect inwardly wondering at her folly in putting on such a thin one—sat down very quiet and demure, and ate her breakfast in silent respect.

I was a shy girl, a very shy girl; but I believe my good feeling so far conquered my timidity as to make me inquire if Miss Hilton would not take off her wet shoes, and have a pair of slippers; and then meeting my aunt's eye, I subsided in fearful blushes, lest I had taken too much notice of 'the dressmaker.'

We got on very well together, Miss Hilton and I, when the work began. She took the patterns skilfully, and yielded to all my little peculiarities about grace and beauty in costume. Moreover, she did not treat me as a child, but as a 'young lady;' and when, with great dignity, I sat down to assist her in making the skirt of my aunt's new dress, Miss Hilton still kept a respectful silence, which soothed my pride, and won my favour amazingly.

Now I was a most romantic young damsel, and knew nothing of the world except from books, of which I had read an infinity, good, bad, and indifferent. So, regarding my companion—with her small neat figure, her face of that sort not properly termed good-looking, but yet decidedly *looking good*—I began to take a liking for her very soon, and ventured a few questions.

'Had she come far that wet morning?'

'Only about two miles.'

'She must have risen early then?'

'Yes, about five: she had had to finish a dress before she came.'

What a life! To rise at five, work till eight, walk two miles through those muddy lanes (we lived a short distance out of London), and then begin and work again! I said nothing, but I thought much; and I remember the next time Miss Hilton stood cutting out, I had the sense to place a chair for her. This she acknowledged with a faint blush, which made me think of the sweetest ideal of all young dressmakers—Miss Mitford's 'Olive Hathaway.'

My dressmaker was no ideal—I do not mean to set her up as one. She was merely a gentle, modest, quiet young woman, who worked slowly, though carefully, and who for the first day did not seem to have an idea beyond her needle and thread. The next, I found she had.

I, always an odd sort of girl, happened just then to be wild about a new hobby—phrenology. Now Miss Hilton had a remarkably-shaped forehead, and I never rested until I brought the plaster mapped-out head, and compared her bumps therewith; upon which she smiled, and becoming conversational, seemed to wish to learn something about the new science. So I, forgetting my shyness, and my pride of caste, began seriously to inform the mind of our new dressmaker.

I found she had a mind, and some graceful taste withal, whereupon I valorously undertook my 'mission.' I indulged her with my juvenile notions on art and literature, and while she developed the skill of my fingers, I tried to expand her dormant intellect. Poor, simple soul! I do believe she enjoyed it all sitting working at my open window, with the vine-leaves peeping in, I dilating the while upon innumerable subjects, which doubtless had never before entered her mind. Among these were the country and its beauties. One day some

fortunate chance had brought me a nosegay of fox-gloves, and showing them to her, I found, to my intense pity, that my young Londoner did not even know their name!

'What! Had she never seen wild flowers? Had she never been in the country?'

'Oh yes, she had once lived for six months in a guard-ship off Woolwich, where she had seen the country on the river banks, and her little sisters had sometimes brought home handfuls of daisies from the parks! But for herself, she had worked ever since she could remember; and except the six months in the ship, had never lived anywhere but at Chelsea!'

To me, how dreary seemed such an existence! To stitch—stitch—stitch one's days away; never to read a book, or walk in a country field, or even to know the name of a wild flower! Perhaps, in my deep pity, I overlooked the fact, that one rarely misses pleasures never known; yet still my feelings were strongly excited for poor Mary Hilton. I did not like her the less for learning that her Christian name was that sweet one—Mary. And when all the work was done, and I began to wear the new dresses we had together fabricated, I often thought of the pale, quiet, little thing, and hoped that wherever she was 'working out,' it was with no harder task-mistresses than my good aunt and I.

When we sent for Miss Hilton again it was a sudden call—to make mourning. The lost relative was one too aged and too distant to occasion me much grief, yet I remember the very fact of our sitting sewing black dresses caused our talk to be rather grave; and then the dressmaker told me of a brother—the only one she ever had—who died of consumption; and how she used to sit by him at night, and go out working in the day—towards the last hurrying home so fast lest 'anything might have happened' (that painful gloss we shrinkingly cast over the cold word death) while she was away. How, at the end, it was as she feared. She was working with a lady, who kept her late to finish—just to sew on a few trimmings and hooks and eyes—a mere half-hour's work. But she was that one half hour too late, and never again saw her living brother!

'It was a chance—a mere chance,' she said; 'the lady was not to blame.' And sighing, though without tears—she seemed too quiet for that—the little dressmaker went on with her work again.

We could not finish the mourning in time; it was my fault, I fear, inasmuch as I had invented a fantastic trimming which cost a world of trouble to make, to which poor Miss Hilton submitted with infinite patience. She only asked if she might bring her sister to help her, whereto my aunt graciously assented. But I—always shy of strangers—found great discomfort in the plan. Moreover, the sister's name was Caroline, and I had a girlish prejudice—I have it still—against all Carolines. Miss Caroline Hilton was the exact image of my abhorrence—pretty, vain, talkative—the very type of the worst class of London dressmakers. My aristocratic pride rebelled against her forwardness: I ceased to work in the room; in fact, from the moment she came, I—to travestie irreverently a line from the grandest modern poet—

'Shrank into myself, and was missing ever after.'

Only I made my aunt promise that never again should Miss Caroline darken our doors.

It seems to me, jotting down this sketch at random, that there are in it many lines and touches which belong not alone to the portrait of our dressmaker. Well, let it be so.

When Mary Hilton came to us again it was in the winter-time. She looked, as ever, pale, and was still prone to silence; but there was a greater air of content about her, which spoke of improved fortunes. And in making our engagements with her, it came out accidentally that her hands were full of profitable occupation. Among her new 'ladies,' I remember, were the juvenile scions of a ducal household, wherein she used to be employed for

weeks together. Now I was a simpleton in those days: I had a romantic reverence for rank—not vulgar curiosity, but an ideal homage—and greatly did I delight in hearing about the little noblemen; and Mary Hilton seemed to like telling, not pompously, but simply, how Lady Alice was a beautiful child, and Lady Mary was rather cross, and Baby Lady Blanche was the sweetest little fairy in the world, and would come and talk and play with 'the dressmaker' as much as ever she was allowed. Many visions I mentally had of the lordly household, where the chief filial duty was the privilege of entering carefully dressed with the dessert, and where mamma was not mamma at all, but 'the duchess.' How time passes! The other day I saw in the paper the marriage of the 'beautiful and accomplished Lady Blanche H—.' I thought of 'Baby Lady Blanche,' then of poor Mary Hilton, and sighed.

Our dressmaker worked blithely through the short winter-day, and even when night closed, she seemed in no hurry to go home. About nine o'clock there came up to our workroom a message that some one had called to fetch Miss Hilton: 'A young man,' explained the domestic, hesitating, I suppose, whether she should or should not say 'gentleman.'

'I am really quite glad. I did not like your walking through those dark lanes alone,' said I with infinite relief; and then added in extreme simplicity, 'I thought you had no brother now?'

'It is—not my brother,' murmured our dressmaker, blushing, but faintly, for even the quick blood of youth seemed to creep languidly beneath her constant pallor. I was a child—a very child then. I don't believe I had ever thought of love or lovers—that is, in real life; but some instinct made me cease to question the young woman. Likewise, instead of descending with her, I stayed up stairs; so that she met her friend alone. But I remember opening the blind a little way, and watching two dark figures passing down the snowy lane—watching them, and thinking strange thoughts. It seemed as if a new page were half-opening in life's book.

It had opened; and with eyes light-blinded I had begun to read—for myself, and not for another—before I again saw my little dressmaker.

My aunt and I had changed our abode to the very heart of London, and Mary Hilton had to come to us through four miles of weary streets. I think she would scarcely have done it for gain: it must have been from positive regard for her old customers. She looked much as usual—a little paler perhaps; and she had a slight cough, which I was sorry to hear had lasted some time. But she worked just as well, and just as patiently; and when at nine o'clock came the knock at the door, her smile, though half-concealed, was quite pleasant to see.

I am getting an old woman now, but to this day I incline to love two people who love one another. I do not mind what their rank in life may be; true love is the same in all ranks; and I honestly believe there was true love between my little dressmaker and her Daniel Ray. A respectable, worthy young man was Daniel, as my good and prudent aunt took care to discover. I, in my simple, girlish way, discovered much more. Little did Mary Hilton talk about it; but from her disjointed words I learned that theirs was a long engagement—that Daniel was assistant in a china-shop; that they were waiting, perhaps might have to wait for years, until he could afford to rent a little shop of his own, where she would carry on the dressmaking in the floor above. Meanwhile she at least was quite content; for he came to tea to her father's every Sunday, and in the week-day, wherever she worked, he always fetched her—saw her safe home to Chelsea, and walked back to the City again. Honest, unselfish, faithful lover! Poor Mary Hilton! She, in her humble way, had great happiness—the only happiness which fills a woman's heart.

But one night she had to go home without Daniel Ray. He was in the Potteries, she said, on business; and the poor little thing seemed grieved and trembling when she started to walk home alone, and at night.

She scarce minded the bright, cheerful streets, she said; but she did not like to pass through the lonely squares. The next evening she begged permission to leave by daylight; and at last, with much hesitation, confessed that she had been spoken to by some rude man, and had hurried on past her strength, until, reaching home, she fainted. And then, in my inmost heart, I drew a parallel between myself—a young lady, tenderly guarded, never suffered to cross the threshold alone—and this young person, exposed, without consideration, to any annoyance or danger. The lesson was not lost upon me. All my life, as far as my power went, I have taken care that, whatever her station, a woman should be treated as a woman.

For a week Mary Hilton worked for us, coming and returning each night, walking the whole way, I believe—though I never thought about it then, I have since; and the heedlessness of girlhood has risen up before me as the veriest hard-heartedness. My aunt, too—but she had many things to occupy her mind, and to her Mary Hilton was only 'the dressmaker.' Doubtless we did but as others did, and the young woman expected no more. For I remember, the last night she looked so pale and wearied, that my aunt gave her at supper a glass of wine, and putting into her hand two shillings, instead of the usual eightpence, told her to have an omnibus ride home. And then Mary Hilton blushed and resisted, but finally took the sixpence with a look of such thankfulness! Poor thing!

The next time we wrote for our dressmaker, there came, not gentle little Mary Hilton, but the obnoxious Caroline. Her sister was in ill health, she said, and had been obliged to give up working out, but would make the dress at home, if we liked. It was settled so, only we premised that Mary must come to us to try it on. She came one evening, accompanied by Daniel Ray. For this she faintly apologised, saying 'he never would let her go out alone now.' Whereat my aunt looked pleased; and when she quitted the room, I heard her go into the hall and speak in her own kindly tones to honest Daniel.

Mary Hilton tried on my dress, but seemed scarce able to stand the while. I remembered this afterwards, not then, for I was thinking of my pretty dress, and whether I would look well in it. At that time how I longed to make myself fair! Poor fool! but it was not for vanity, God knows! However, it will not do to ponder on these things now. I did not forget to put my usual question to Mary—how she was prospering in the world; and whether there was any near chance of the little china-shop, with 'Mrs Ray, Dressmaker,' on the first floor? She smiled hopefully, and said something about 'the spring,' and 'when her health was better;' and in a very shy and timid way she hinted that, if we wanted bonnets or millinery, there was a sister of Daniel's lately established in the next street—a sister always dependent on him till now. Faithfully I promised to give our small custom to Miss Ray; and so, looking quite happy, our little dressmaker descended. I am glad I saw that happy look—I am glad I noticed the perfect content with which the little delicate thing walked away slowly, leaning on her faithful Daniel. Otherwise, in my after pity, I might have thought life's burthen heavy, and its fates unequal. But it is not so.

Soon after, my aunt wanted a winter bonnet, and I proposed to visit Miss Ray. 'Certainly, my dear Letty,' was the contented acquiescence. So we went, and found there a sharp-featured, Frenchified young milliner, the very antipodes of Daniel. During the trying on I inquired after Miss Hilton.

'Very ill, miss—confined to the house—consumption, I think. But wouldn't a paler blue suit your complexion best?'

I laid down my ribbons, startled and distressed.

'Poor Miss Hilton!' said my compassionate aunt. 'I thought she would die of consumption—so many dressmakers do. But how does your brother bear it?'

'As well as he can, ma'am. It was a foolish thing

from the beginning,' added the milliner sharply, her natural manner getting the better of her politeness. 'The Hiltons are all consumptive, and Daniel knew it. But I beg your pardon, ma'am; perhaps you will try on this shape?'

I turned away, feeling very sorrowful. My first intent was to ask my aunt to let me go and see poor Mary Hilton; but when one is young, one sometimes feels ashamed even of a good impulse which might be termed romantic; and I was so mocked for my romance already. I planned various schemes to fulfil and yet disguise my purpose; but somehow they all faded away. And then my own life was so tremulously full, so rich in youth's dreams, that out of it the remembrance of the poor dressmaker soon melted like a cloud.

Late in April—I know it was April—I wanted a new bonnet. It must be a pretty and becoming one—I was wildly anxious about that—one that hid the faults of my poor face, and set off to advantage any single beauty that Heaven had given it. At Miss Ray's I tried on bonnet after bonnet, examined myself eagerly yet tremulously in all, tried to gain a clear, unbiassed notion of what my poor self was like, and at each look felt my cheek changing and my heart throbbing.

'Letty, my dear!—'

My aunt coming forward, after a confabulation with Miss Ray, roused me from what might have seemed a reverie of girlish vanity; and was—no matter what it was.

'Letty, you will be sorry to hear that poor Mary Hilton—'

Mary Hilton! For weeks she had not crossed my thought: nay, not even now, so full was I of anxiety about my new bonnet.

'Poor Mary Hilton died last week!'

It came upon me like a shock—a pang—a sense of the end that must come to life, and all life's dreams. I—walking in the dazzling light of mine—felt a coldness creep over me; a sting, too, of self-reproach and shame.

I laid down the pretty bonnet, and thought, almost with tears, of the poor little dressmaker, who would never work for me any more—of her hard toils ended, her humble love-dream closed, her life's brief story told; and all passed into silence!

Then I thought of the poor faithful lover: I could not ask after him—but my aunt did.

'Daniel bears it pretty well,' answered the sister, looking grave, and shedding one little tear. It must be a hard woman indeed who does not show some feeling when brought into immediate contact with death. 'He was with her to the last: she died holding his hand.'

'Poor thing—poor thing!' murmured my tender-hearted aunt.

'Yes, she was a good little creature, was Mary Hilton; but as for the rest of the family, they were nothing over-good—not fit for my brother Daniel,' said the young woman rather proudly. 'Perhaps all was for the best. He will get over it in time.'

So doubtless he did: possibly the humble little creature who loved him, and died thus loving, might even have wished it so. Every unselfish woman would. But I never heard what became of Daniel Ray, for my aunt and I soon after vanished from London; and when we returned, our milliner had vanished too. Mary Hilton, and all memories belonging to her, were thus swept utterly away into the chambers of the past—my girlish past.

But the other day, finding an old, many-years' old dress, one whose veriest fragments I could kiss and weep over, I remembered, among other things, who it was that had then fashioned it; and looking on the careful stitches, thought of the poor fingers, now only dust. And a great sense came over me of the nothingness of all things, and of our need to do good in the daytime, because of the quick-coming night 'wherein no man can work.'

My lady readers—my 'lilies that neither toil nor spin'—show womanly tenderness to those who do toil

and spin for your pleasure or profit; and if you are disposed to be harsh, thoughtless, or exacting, think of this simple sketch from actual life of Our Old Dress-maker.

### PHILOSOPHY OF JOURNALISM.

THE history of Journalism is still unwritten; but the materials accumulate fast, and by and by we shall have a historian rising from the crowd of annalists and essayists, to weave together their loose facts and speculations, and while ascertaining the origin, and tracing the progress, of this department of literature, to show its connection with, and influence upon, the destinies of the people. In the meantime, we have now at least a Herodotus of Journalism, who gives the results of observation and inquiry in a picturesque and animated manner, and who, though no more a historian, in the higher sense of the word, than the illustrious Halicarnassian, is, like him, an industrious collector and an agreeable narrator. The pages we refer to contain the material history of journalism in England, which is high praise, both as regards utility and originality: the coming man will interweave with this its moral history, and deserve a higher name.\*

Journalism is public opinion embodied in the periodical press; and if this definition—condensed and corrected from Canning—be correct, it is obvious that its history must be something more than a mere history of newspapers. The 'moral of the history of the press' is not, as our author strangely concludes, 'that the state is powerless in checking it in a journal-reading country.' This is but a minor conclusion involved in a major of far more importance. The former may be established by the annalist; while the latter, as we shall presently attempt to show, must be deduced by the historian.

Before the dawn of journalism in this country, towards the close of the reign of James I., news was a luxury which could only be enjoyed by the wealthy. Country gentlemen employed persons in London to send them from time to time 'News-letters,' and this kind of reporting had grown into a profession. The bright idea at length came into the head of one of the news-writers, whose name was Nathaniel Butter, to produce his intelligence at regular intervals; and instead of writing it for the benefit of an individual, to print it, and depend upon the public for remuneration. From a reporter, therefore, he became an editor; he turned his letter-room into a publishing office; and on the 23d May 1622 the first number of the first English journal, the 'Weekly News,' made its appearance. Butter was laughed at, but he was not melted from his purpose: he and his establishment were ridiculed on the stage by Ben Jonson, and but little 'patronised,' as the phrase is, by the public; but there was vitality in the notion, and the first journal jogged on, however meanly; and its editor, timid, subservient, and poor as he was, contrived to live by the business for eighteen years.

The infancy of journalism was passed in leading-strings; but during the civil wars, our author tells us, the aid of the press was invoked by both sides, and its trammels, therefore, fell to the ground. The press, in reality, grew with the growth, and strengthened with the strength, of public opinion. Men did not select it as an instrument of warfare: they merely gave forth in its pages the feelings that had reached a state of ebullition; and it acquired importance as it became more truly and more widely an expositor of the sentiments of the people. Such expositions were crushed for a time by Charles II.; but the Revolution laid a solid foundation for the liberty of the press. Government, no longer driven to attempt the suppression of a power it feared, appealed in its own turn to public opinion. Government papers

were instituted to do battle with opposition papers; and thus the system, carried afterwards to so prodigious a height, was fairly commenced.

Before this time the finest spirits of the age had seen the necessity for a free press; and Milton more especially regarded any interference with it as a kind of sacrilege:—'Books,' said he, 'are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a progeny of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve, as in a phial, the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous dragon's teeth; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men. And yet, on the other hand, unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book: who kills a man, kills a reasonable creature—God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were, in the eye. Many a man lives a burthen to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life.' The 'armed men' springing a little later from these dragon's teeth were political libels, declared by the author of 'Cato's Letters' to be merely an evil arising out of a much greater good. 'And as to those,' says he, 'who are for locking up the press because it produces monsters, they ought to consider that so do the sun in the Nile; and that it is something better for the world to bear some particular inconveniences arising from general blessings, than to be wholly deprived of fire and water.'

During the reign of Queen Anne, the first daily newspaper, the 'Daily Courant,' appeared, and journalism, hitherto pretty nearly confined to news, began to assume the mixed character it has to-day, and to spread abroad the speculations of the writers upon the intelligence they communicated. Before this an attempt was made at journals consisting wholly of speculation; but these were merely the news-pamphlets of an earlier period, reproduced in the periodical form, and they led, as a matter of course, to the development of the regular newspaper. This was the epoch of Defoe, who was sentenced to the pillory for a political libel, and who brought out his Review while still in jail. The 'Daily Courant' was published in 1709, at which period there were eighteen other London papers, although the written news-letters still maintained so close a rivalry with the printed sheets, that we find one of the latter reminding the public that print cost less than manuscript. This period was likewise distinguished by the appearance of literary journals—the 'Tatler,' 'Spectator,' 'Guardian,' &c. when the genius of Addison, Steele, Swift, Bolingbroke, and others, conferred an air of elegance and distinction upon the public press.

Addison's remarks upon the appetite for news in his day, and the way in which it was satisfied, would apply in their general features to our own:—'There is no humour in my countrymen,' he says, 'which I am more inclined to wonder at than their general thirst after news. There are about half-a-dozen ingenious men who live very plentifully upon this curiosity of their fellow-subjects. They all of them receive the same advices from abroad, and very often in the same words; but their way of cooking it is so very different, that there is no citizen, who has an eye to the public good, that can leave the coffee-house with peace of mind before he has given every one of them a reading. These several dishes of news are so very agreeable to the palate of my countrymen, that they are not only pleased with them when they are served up hot, but when they are again set cold before them by those penetrating politicians who oblige the public with their reflections and observations upon every piece of intelligence that is sent us from abroad. The text is given us by one set of writers, and the comment by another. But notwithstanding we have the same tale told us in so many different papers, and, if occasion requires, in so many articles of the same paper; notwithstanding,

\* The Fourth Estate: Contributions towards a History of Newspapers, and of the Liberty of the Press. By F. Knight Hunt. 2 vols. London: Bogue. 1850.



in a scarcity of foreign posts, we hear the same story repeated by different advices from Paris, Brussels, the Hague, and from every great town in Europe; notwithstanding the multitude of annotations, explanations, reflections, and various readings which it passes through, our time lies heavy on our hands till the arrival of the fresh mail: we long to receive further particulars, to hear what will be the next step, or what will be the consequences of that which we have already taken.' He proposes, in the scarcity of foreign news, to establish a journal which shall give the occurrences of every little town, village, or hamlet within the range of the Penny-Post—that is to say, within ten miles of London. The paper of the 'Spectator' containing this proposal is the source of the most popular jocularities of the present passing day; but for all that, the scheme has been carried out in serious earnest. The only difference is, that as the Penny-Post embraces now the whole kingdom, instead of a single journal of news, there are hundreds, each district having one or more sheets to take care of its own village and hamlets.

Political libels were still the great sin of the press; and when Queen Anne had been ten years on the throne, she made an attempt, by means of her parliament, to impose some restrictions. Journalism, however, had now risen into respectability, and a general repugnance was manifested against any overt act of interference: but its enemies hit upon a plan which remains in force to this day. A penny stamp on a whole sheet, and a halfpenny on a half-sheet, together with the duty of a shilling on each advertisement, did more mischief than a censorship: many of the journals were at once discontinued; others united into one publication; even the 'Spectator,' having been obliged to increase its price, was dropped for want of sufficient circulation; and Swift wrote to Stella that 'all Grub Street was ruined by the Stamp Act.' The formidable character of the press at this time is shown both by the good and bad fortune of Steele. This witty writer was rewarded for his journalism with the appointment of commissioner of the Stamp-Office; but when he had the folly to give up his place for a seat in parliament, his talent as a public writer showed itself to be so intractable, that the whole power of the ministers was used to obtain his expulsion, which, with some little difficulty, they effected. Later than this the press rendered good service during the rebellion of 1745; and Fielding, from the editor of the 'True Patriot,' became a Bow-Street magistrate.

Dr Johnson describes thus the public press of his time:—'No species of literary men has lately been so much multiplied as the writers of news. Not many years ago the nation was content with one gazette, but now we have not only in the metropolis papers for every morning and every evening, but almost every large town has its weekly historian, who regularly circulates his periodical intelligence, and fills the villagers of his district with conjectures on the events of war, and with debates on the true interests of Europe.' He tells us that the knowledge of the common people of England is remarked by all foreigners to be greater than that of any other vulgar; and this he accounts for by 'the rivulets of intelligence which are continually trickling among us, which every one may catch, and of which every one partakes.'

Footes, like Ben Jonson in another age, did everything in his power to make the press ridiculous; but dramatic criticism began to appear in the newspapers in his time. Before then, the doings of the theatres were chronicled merely in the way of news, and one newspaper paid £200 a year for such intelligence. When criticism, however, was added, the tables were turned, and the press obtained a superiority it has never relinquished. The theatres, instead of receiving £200, laid out at least £1000 in newspaper advertisements.

Since the time of Cromwell, no authorised reports of proceedings in parliament had appeared in the journals, although from time to time certain newspapers continued to publish them on the chance of impunity.

This custom at length grew into a kind of privilege, and was a part—and a highly important one—of the liberty of the age. The newspapers became bolder—they had even the audacity to give names in full; and at length, in 1771, the ire of parliament was awakened, and the question brought fairly to issue. Two printers were taken into custody under the Speaker's warrant, and discharged by the lord mayor Wilkes and his brother magistrate Oliver. The result was that the city dignitaries were committed to the Tower. Parliament, however, dared not go farther. On the prorogation the prisoners left the Tower in triumph; and the right assumed by the press of printing the debates has never since been called in question. This, however, should not be mistaken for what our author calls it—a triumph of the press. It was a triumph of public liberty; and if the pulpit, instead of the press, had chanced to be identified with it in the matter in question, the result would have been the same.

The newspaper annals of the present century are full of progress, libels, government prosecutions, and struggles of the unstamped. A few great papers absorb attention by their magnitude and importance; for as the system advanced, its obvious tendency was to direct the current of popularity into particular channels. This proceeded remotely from the moral gregariousness of men, but proximately from the circumstance of the struggle to secure and extend popularity involving so immense a capital as to confine competition for the first rank to a very small number. Of these great papers, the 'Public Advertiser' was the earliest of the daily tribe which attained to enduring reputation. It was the arena of Junius, although the popularity of his celebrated letters did not effect the wonders in the circulation of the paper which have been attributed to them. The 'Morning Chronicle' commenced in 1769, and at the beginning of the French Revolution became the property of Mr Perry and Mr Gray. Coleridge and Campbell both wrote for it, but with the usual ineffectiveness of mere literary men, who want the readiness demanded by journalism. The 'Morning Post' originated in 1772. The 'Morning Herald' was established in opposition to the 'Post' in 1780. The 'Times' began its surprising career in 1788, and was at first chiefly distinguished by being printed 'logographically'; that is to say, by types forming entire words, instead of letters. The efforts of Mr John Walter, however, the logographic printer, were less successful than those of the late Mr Walter with his steam-press, which, by successive improvements, is now capable of producing 8000 copies in the hour. Among other plans fallen upon by this Mr Walter for obtaining efficient literary assistance, was his encouraging a supply of 'letters to the editor,' which frequently led him to the discovery of a clever writer. His example in this respect was zealously followed by his chief editor, the late Mr Barnes, who never missed the opportunity of obtaining, at any cost, the assistance of a promising pen. The writer of these columns remembers, that when he was a young literary man upon town, an article of his in the 'Foreign Quarterly Review' chanced to attract the attention of Mr Barnes; upon which he immediately sought out the editor of the 'Review,' to inquire whether his unknown contributor would accept of a parliamentary reportership. By such zeal, and by liberal, not to say lavish rewards to its authors, the 'Times' was able to take advantage of those political currents which carried it to the first rank in the field of journalism. In addition to these morning papers, the publicans are represented by the 'Morning Advertiser,' one of the earliest established; and within the last few years there came into the field the 'Daily News,' with the avowed intention of underselling the rest, although it found itself obliged eventually to come up to the standard price. Several other speculations of the kind have been tried, with abundance of money, and of literary talent; but the elements of success in such works seem to be wholly peculiar, and both capitalists and literary men were soon put *hors de combat*.

'A summary of the British newspaper press,' says Mr Hunt, 'arranged according to locality and to political bias at the end of the year 1849, offers the following results:—In London, 113 papers; in England, 223; in Wales, 11; in Scotland, 85; in Ireland, 101; in the British islands, 14. General summary: Liberal papers, 218; Conservative, 174; Neutral, 155. The total number of journals, of all shades of opinion, being 547.' On a fully-appointed London morning paper upwards of 100 persons are regularly employed in the printing and business departments alone; and the following is a general summary of *weekly* expenses:—

'Editing, writing, and reporting a double paper during the session of parliament, . . . . .	L.230
Foreign and local correspondence, . . . . .	100
Printing, machining, publishing, and general expenses, double paper, with occasional second and third editions, and an evening edition three days a week, . . . . .	900
Weekly total, . . . . .	L.320'

'The prevalence or scarcity of newspapers in a country,' says our compiler, 'affords a sort of index to its social state: where journals are numerous, the people have power, intelligence, and wealth; where journals are few, the many are in reality mere slaves.' This is one of those external facts which the social physiologist may remark; but journalism will be treated by the philosopher as something very different from a mere symptom of national prosperity. We are accustomed to look upon 'the Press' as some powerful and external engine which men may adapt as they please to their own purposes; but the fallacy of the notion may be deduced clearly enough even from so slight a sketch as the foregoing. No effort, no power, no will can establish a journal whose place is not already made in the public mind. Without this, money is useless, and talent vain. Mr Murray drenched the 'Representative' with his treasure, as Mr D'Israeli did with his genius, and all to no purpose. Mere literary men, in fact, unless possessing unusually observant minds and plastic pens, are always bad journalists; for their papers are exponents of their own idiosyncrasies, not of the public thought. A journal does not, in the common phrase, address a certain class of readers: it is the voice of these readers themselves. It is the expression of an idea previously existing in their minds, or the supply of a thing for which their souls even unconsciously thirsted. A journal may be the voice of an individual; but the power of the voice depends upon the echoes which take it up, and which prolong and infinitely multiply its vibrations. No journalist is, in the strict sense of the word, original—if he were so, he would be alone: he is merely the mouthpiece, the agent, the representative of his readers, and he employs his energies in collecting the peculiar aliment which their taste demands, and which their intellectual constitutions are capable of assimilating. These are facts which journalists know practically—in instinctively; and it has often been said that the greatest of all our existing newspapers owes its success to the unwearied care with which it watches the changing tide of public opinion, so as to appear to direct that mighty current on which it only floats.

It is essential to observe this identity of journalism and the stuff of which the minds of aggregates of men are composed. Without this, we shall always be floundering from one mistake into another, and shifting the blame or the merit from the agent to the instrument. We praise, for instance, the zeal of the press in catching up foreign news the instant it approaches our shores; but we fail to remark that the success of these efforts depends upon the most wonderful mail system that ever existed. 'We have now nearly a hundred and fifty steamers,' says the 'Hants Advertiser,' 'most of them of the greatest power and speed, engaged specially in bringing political and commercial intelligence from all parts of the world. They are never delayed at any port at which they may touch, but for the purpose of coaling, landing and embarking mails; and their rapid

and punctual arrival in the country, after in some instances running a distance of three thousand miles without stopping, is one of the wonders of this remarkable age.' Journalism, in fact, is merely a portion of the civilisation, the freedom, the greatness—and of the subserviency, the meanness, and the iniquity—of the time and country.

There are portions of the press which would be a disgrace to any age—which pander to the vices that everywhere exist in large populations, and draw a foul subsistence from the very garbage of human nature. Of these we are very properly loud in our condemnation; but it would be well to reflect that such journals are but instruments, voices, exponents, like other journals; and the reflection will teach us that reform must take place in character, not in mere expression. The present, however, with all its greatness, is decidedly the age of Tinkering. To encourage sobriety, we would shut up the public-houses: but when the question is to dispel ignorance and elevate the moral feeling by means of education, we fall to arguing about the mode, and postpone the task *ad infinitum*. Pains and penalties inflicted upon the instruments are of little avail in putting down the base part of the press. We must deprive such papers of their field of circulation by raising the public mind above their level. In like manner, the littleness that deform even the greatest journals are *our own*, and we must rise above them in our own minds before they will cease to exist in the exponents of our feelings. Journalism, in short, being simply public opinion expressed in a periodical form, is a perpetual reflection of the sentiments and intellect of the nation, and a gauge by which we may measure both its advance and its shortcomings. To write its history, therefore, is to trace the progress of civilisation, and to prophesy of the future of mankind.

We should not conclude without saying that Mr Hunt's volumes contain a much greater mass of materials on the interesting subject he has chosen than can be found elsewhere in a single work; and that, if our object in the perusal had been to select amusing and striking extracts, we could with great ease have filled the whole number.

#### AN ADVENTURE IN THE RED SEA.

FROM my infancy I had longed to visit the scenes memorable from their association with Scripture. The vivid pictures of the sacred historian being the first presented to my imagination, had most profoundly impressed it; and my feelings when, in 1842, I actually stood upon the shore of the Red Sea, I should vainly endeavour to describe. Before us lay a sea of the deepest blue, in comparison with which the Mediterranean would look faded; it was scarcely broken by a ripple, and all over it danced and flashed the beams of such a sun! for it was near the end of May, and the heat was daily attaining greater power. On the opposite shore of that narrow arm of the sea which runs up to Suez, we could distinguish a party of travellers on camels, attended by an Arab escort. They had probably just crossed the gulf; a little beyond them the mirage favoured us with a ghostly reflection of Suez, very blue and indistinct. At no great distance from us lay our own baggage-camels, quietly feeding; and close to the beach was an Arab boat with its crew waiting to convey us to the steamer that lay some little distance out, the water being too shallow, and the coral rocks too numerous, to allow it to come nearer to the town. Indeed (as we saw afterwards) a little steamer belonging to Mehemet Ali had got aground much lower; and day by day, for nearly a year, the worthy imams had been down to pray Allah for its removal to safe floating again, making, however, no other effort to effect such an event. Of course it was 'written on the steamer' that it should not float, and float it did not; probably it is there still. The whole scene presented to us was one of busy life and glad sunshine; and as one

gazed, it grew difficult to remember that these joyous waters

— Rolled  
Over Pharaoh's crown of gold —

over the night and the majesty of old Egypt.

But the yellow-slipped and stockingless owner of our boat gave us little time for reflection, summoning us almost directly on board, as the steamer wanted to be 'under weigh' before sunset; and we embarked, seated for the first time in the Oriental fashion on the little half deck, there being no seats. As the oars of our crew fell into the water, they broke into a wild chant, the effect of which was very good. They did not sing in parts, but alternately, catching the notes from each other in a very singular manner. Thus, amidst music and sunshine, we began a voyage which, from several causes, proved very disagreeable and unpropitious. The number of passengers that embarked proved too great for the size of the steamer; we were consequently much crowded; the heat on board was more intolerable than one can imagine—that of India appeared as nothing after it—and the vessel literally swarmed with cockroaches.

Not even a distant view of Sinai, a nearer one of Mount St Agnes, nor the infinite variety which the surface of the sea itself presented, could compensate for the horrors of that burning climate and its disgusting vermin. Under any other circumstances we should have found a resource from the ennui of a voyage in watching the motley groups that composed our ship's company. There were at least seventy passengers besides the captain and European sailors, the negroes and Nubians who worked in the engine-room, and upwards of twenty Parsee, Mohammedan, and Hindoo servants. On the paddle-box the Nubian pilot was generally to be seen; a magnificent figure, attired in long flowing robes of white, that contrasted admirably with his ebony skin and glittering black eyes. At his evening orisons he really offered a charming subject for a sketch, but an intention of taking it never occurred to us then; physical suffering renders one almost blind to the picturesque, and it was only by a strong effort that we could bear up against that terrible overpowering heat. Never before had we been at all aware with how much propriety the superstition of the dark ages had condemned evil spirits to an abode beneath those scorching waters! As we approached the Straits of Babel-Mandeb, the thermometer rose, and a day of unusual heat and exhaustion was followed by a still more burning night. I had good cause to remember it! A daughter of Lady A——'s shared my cabin, which was just outside the saloon, and had no outer door, in place of which the entrance was closed by a canvas curtain. We had opened the port-hole, but no breath of air entered. It was a dead calm. The steamer was cutting her way through a sea of glass, apparently surrounded by an atmosphere of fire. The gentlemen had gone on deck to sleep, as the saloon would have resembled the Black Hole of Calcutta had its usual occupants remained in it; only a Parsee or two lingered below to wait, if required, on the ladies, for I need scarcely say that there were no stewardesses on board an Oriental steamer. Miss A—— proposed that we should have the lamp suspended in our cabin extinguished, in order to diminish the heat. It hung too high to be reached by either of us, and her mother's maid was ill, and had gone to bed; we were therefore compelled to call in one of our Eastern attendants to put it out; and doubtless, during the time he obeyed our command, he took with his downcast black eyes a quick survey of the apartment, thus becoming aware that my mattress was placed on two large trunks to raise it from the deck; for in those days the Red Sea steamers were totally unfurnished except the saloon, and we had to use the things provided for our desert *trajet*, amongst which, of course, we did not count a bedstead or cot. The light out, we were both soon asleep. About midnight, however, my slumber was disturbed by feeling a heavy pressure on my throat. I sat up, fancying I was suffering from nightmare, and found

Lady A—— at the canvas door holding a lamp, and in her night-dress. She asked 'if anything had disturbed me!' I told her I had been dreaming some one was choking me. She laughed, told me her daughter, Mrs F——, who slept in her room, had also been distressed by a dream; 'she supposed the heat affected us both'—and then withdrew with the light. A second and a third time the same cause awoke me; and each time I found Lady A—— in the room! It was singular. The last time I fancied that, as I opened my eyes, I saw in the light of Lady A——'s advancing lamp a tall, muffled figure, with terrible black eyes, bending over me. This dream, or reality, whichever it was, so completely 'frightened sleep,' that it visited me no more that night: I begged her light, and read till daybreak. The next morning Lady A—— told me that her daughter had three times in the course of the night awoke her, and sent her to our room, having as often dreamed, with painful distinctness, that a tall dark man was murdering us. She at first thought we had both been disturbed by a dream, but my faint glimpse of a retreating figure the third time convinced me that there had been something of reality in the matter, especially as some favourite rings of mine were missing. So, with Lady A——'s concurrence, I determined (not to make a disturbance about what might prove a false alarm) to sit up the next night and watch for my nocturnal visitor, who, if he had been disturbed by Lady A—— the last night, might probably venture another visit the next. Lady A—— promised also to sit up, and come to me if I called her. Ten o'clock came. A Mohammedan, whose eyes at daylight had appeared to me strangely like those of my dream—if it were a dream—brought me a cup of coffee, assuring me with Oriental courtesy that 'it would do missees good.'

The attention was a little suspicious; so, though I took the cup, I drank none of its contents, but poured them away, and returned it to him empty. I wished him to think I had taken it. Then I dropped the canvas screen, kept the lamp burning, took a book, and read. Very slowly and heavily passed the hours. Oppressed by heat, I could scarcely resist my inclination to sleep. The words I read had little meaning for me, and I forgot incessantly the subject of the page as I listened to the dash of the waves against the side of the vessel—a sound which was gradually lulling me to repose, when, with a clash that startled me, twelve o'clock was struck on the ship's bell. I was thoroughly awake then, and looking up, suddenly perceived the long fingers of a black hand grasping the side of the canvas screen in the act of withdrawing it. I called loudly for Lady A——, and moved hurriedly to the doorway. She was with me in an instant, but no one was visible outside. As she had not met him in coming from her cabin, it was evident that the intruder had taken refuge in the saloon—he had no other retreat. We resolved to seek him there. I have since thought we did a brave, if not a rash action in following him, alone as we were; but the lady who proposed it is such a model of gentle courage and quiet resolution, that one never thinks of fear when with her. The saloon was shaped like a T, from the (now empty) bed-cabins that projected into it, the upper part of the letter being towards the stern, and containing a number of couches formed on the lockers, as they are called. We searched it throughout. We looked under the long table—under the sofas—everywhere. There was no sign of Mohammedan or Christian! Lady A—— now came to the conclusion that both nights I must have been dreaming. It is very provoking to be suspected of sleeping when one is convinced of one's own wakefulness: I was certain of my recent vision's *materiality*, and therefore intreated Lady A—— to come out of the saloon, and wish me 'good-night' in a loud voice; but instead of leaving me, to slip behind my screen, and 'mark the event.' She good-naturedly complied, and a few minutes proved that I had not been deceived. Very slowly and stealthily we heard some one issue from the saloon, and on peeping through the aperture left by the curtain, we saw a tall muffled figure, such as I had described, steal up the ladder leading to the deck. There could no longer be

any doubt; though how the robber had eluded our search was, and continues to be, a mystery. It is probable, however, that he crept out of one of the stern port-holes or windows, and hung by his hands till we left the room; the complete power the Arabs and all Orientals possess over their limbs rendering it an easy task for him afterwards to effect his return by the same ingress. What was now to be done? We had not thought of catching him in his rapid flight up the ladder. Nay, I doubt if we could. Lady A—— (as I declared that I could not identify him from his twenty comrades, and as we left the steamer at Aden the next day or the following one) proposed that we should keep the affair secret, as any inquiry into the matter would be fruitless, and make a disturbance for nothing. To this I agreed, but kept watch till daybreak. We were one more night on board, not arriving at Aden till four or five o'clock in the morning of the second day, but I did not make it a vigil. One of Lady A——'s sons—a cavalry officer—came down and slept on the saloon table, two other gentlemen occupied the sofas; and thus within reach of protection, we ventured to sleep quietly, and without fear.

The robber's intention in thus daringly entering my cabin was probably to open and plunder the trunks on which I slept. He imagined probably that they contained articles of value, for the better security of which I had had my mattress placed on them, and hoped quietly to displace me; intending perhaps, if I awoke, to insure my eternal silence. It is very certain I could not have called for help with that evil grasp upon my throat! The boldness of the attempt, though it might surprise a European, was not singular in the East; as we were told that in India instances had occurred of officers having been robbed of the sheet on which they slept without being awakened! Lady A——'s appearance had, however, startled him from his prey, and obliged him to seek a hiding-place in the saloon by means of the inner door of my cabin.

It was with great delight that I heard the announcement of our arrival at Aden, where we were to embark in another vessel, and quit the Red Sea for the Indian Ocean. The vague dreams of beauty and solemnity I had formerly attached to it were gone; and it has ever since been associated in my mind with a feeling of horror and dislike; although of course I felt, and do feel very thankful for the escape which I made upon its blue fatal waters.

#### STEAM-BRIDGE OF THE ATLANTIC.

In the summer of 1838 the Atlantic Ocean was crossed for the first time by vessels exclusively propelled by steam-power. These pioneers were the *Sirius* and the *Great Western*—the former built for another class of voyages, and afterwards lost on the station between Cork and London; the latter built expressly for Atlantic navigation, and which has ever since been more or less employed in traversing that ocean. Other ships followed: the *British Queen*, afterwards sold to the Belgian government; the *Great Liverpool*, subsequently altered and placed on the line between Southampton and Alexandria; and the *President*, lost, no man knows how or where, in the year 1841. Then came what is called 'Cunard's Line,' consisting of a number of majestic steam-ships built in the Clyde, to carry passengers and mails between Liverpool in Europe, and Halifax, Boston, and New York in America; a service they have performed with the most marvellous regularity. The only great misfortune that has befallen this line has been the loss of one of the vessels, the *Columbia*, which, in nautical phrase, 'broke her back' on some rocks on the American shore of the Atlantic. Then came the *Great Britain*, the greatest of them all, differing from the others in two respects—first, in being built of iron instead of wood; and second, in being propelled by the Archimedean screw instead of by the old paddle-wheels; and, alas! she has differed from them all in a third respect, inasmuch as neither the same good-luck at-

tended her as in general fell to the lot of the ships of the Cunard Line, nor the same irretrievable bad fortune as was met by the *President* and the *Columbia*; for, after having made several voyages very successfully, she, to the amazement of all mankind, very quietly went ashore in Dundrum Bay, on the east coast of Ireland, from whence, after spending a most uncomfortable winter, she was brought back to Liverpool, and now lies in the Bramley-Moore Dock there, like a huge mass of iron suffering under premature rust. But all this time these ocean steamers that periodically brought to New York passengers and intelligence from Europe were British built. They had been constructed in the Avon, the Mersey, and the Clyde, the greater number having been launched in the same waters as first received Henry Bell's little *Comet*. Why did America not embark in such enterprise? As regards steam navigation, Fulton was before Bell; New York before Glasgow; the *Fulton's Folly* before the *Comet*; and was

'The greatest nation  
In all creation'

to be outdone in the field of enterprise by the old Britishers? American pride said 'No'; American instinct said 'No'; and, above all, American capitalists said 'No!' Keels were laid down in New York; the shipbuilders' yards became unusually active; and the stately timbers of majestic ships gradually rose before the admiring gaze of the citizens of the great republic.

But the race of William the Doubter is not yet extinct, and many, as usual, shook their wise heads at the enterprise. It was admitted that in inland navigation the Americans had beaten the world; that except an occasional blow-up, their river steamers were really models of enterprise and skill; but it was gravely added, the Mississippi is not the Atlantic; icebergs are not snags; and an Atlantic wave is somewhat different from an Ohio ripple. These truisms were of course undeniable; but to them was quickly added another fact, about which there could be as little mistake—namely, the arrival at Southampton, after a voyage which, considering it was the first, was quite successful, of the American-built steam-ship *Washington* from New York. There seemed to be a touch of calm irony in thus making the *Washington* the first of their Atlantic-crossing steamers, as if the Americans had said, 'You doubting Britishers! when you wished to play tyrant over us, did we not raise one *Washington* who chastised you? and now that you want to monopolise Atlantic navigation, we have raised another *Washington*, just to let you know that we will beat you again!'

The *Washington*, however, was only the precursor of greater vessels. These were to sail between New York and Liverpool, carrying the mails under a contract with the American government. In size, and speed, and splendour of fittings, these new ships were to surpass the old: even their names were, if possible, to be more grand and expressive. The vessels of Cunard's Line had lately appropriated the names of the four great continents of the globe, but the oceans remained, and their names were adopted; the new steamers being called the *Atlantic*, *Pacific*, *Arctic*, *Baltic*, and *Adriatic*. The first of these was despatched from New York on the 27th of April last, and arrived in the Mersey on the 10th of May, thus making the passage in about thirteen days. The voyage would have been made in a shorter time but for two accidents: the bursting of the condenser; and the discovery, after the vessel was some distance at sea, of the weakness of the floats or boards on the paddle-wheels. About two days were entirely lost in making repairs; and the speed was reduced, in order to prevent the floats from being entirely torn away from the paddle-wheels. These things considered, the passage was very successful. The average time occupied during 1849 by the vessels of the old line between New York and Liverpool was 12½ days; but their voyages were longer than those of the *Atlantic*, as they called at Halifax. The shortest passage was that made by the *Canada*



from New York to Liverpool *via* Halifax in eleven days four hours.

The *Atlantic* remained for nineteen days at Liverpool; and during all that time she had to lie in a part of the river called the Sloyne, in consequence of none of the dock-entrances being wide enough to allow her to pass in. Her breadth, measuring across the paddle-boxes, is 75 feet; of the vessels of Cunard's Line, about 70 feet; and the widest dock-entrance is barely sufficient to admit the latter. The *Great Britain*, though longer than any other steam-ship that ever entered the Mersey, is not so broad, as, being propelled by the screw, she has no paddle-wheels. A dock at the north shore is now in course of construction expressly for the accommodation of the *Atlantic* and her consorts.

For several days during her stay at Liverpool the *Atlantic* was open to visitors on payment of sixpence each, the money thus realised (upwards of £70) being paid over to the trustees of the Institution for the Blind, whose church and school are now being removed to give greater space round the station of the London and North-Western Railway. On the day of my visit crowds of people were waiting at the pier for the steamer that was to convey them to the *Atlantic*. Whitsuntide visitors from the manufacturing districts were hastening on board the numerous vessels waiting to take them on pleasure excursions to the Isle of Man, North Wales, or round the light-ship at the mouth of the river. There was great risk of making mistakes in the hurry; and the remark of an old sailor, that the vessel could 'easily be known by the Yankee flag flying at the fore,' served only still further to confuse the many, who could not tell one flag from another. However, a small tug steamer soon appeared with a dirty piece of bunting, just recognisable as the famous 'star-spangled banner,' flying at the fore; and her deck was in a few minutes so crowded, that orders were issued to take no more on board, and away we steamed, leaving about a hundred people to exercise their patience until the steamer's return. A man at my elbow, who afterwards appeared in the capacity of money-taker, whispered, 'There's the *captin*!' and on looking up the gangway, I saw—

\* A man of middle age,  
In aspect manly, grave, and sage,\*

looking calmly in the direction of the colossal ship of which he was the commander; his complexion browned by exposure to sun and wind, storm and spray; and his whole demeanour indicating the calm strength acquired by long familiarity with the elements in their roughest moods. As we approached the ship, her appearance was not prepossessing. She is undoubtedly clumsy; the three masts are low, the funnel is short and dumpy, there is no bowsprit, and her sides are painted black, relieved only by one long streak of dark-red. Her length between the perpendiculars—that is, the length of her keel—is 276 feet; breadth (exclusive of paddle-boxes), 45; thus keeping up the proportion, as old as Noah's ark, of six feet of length to one of breadth. The stern is rounded, having in the centre the American eagle, clasping the starred and striped shield, but no other device. The figure-head is of colossal dimensions, intended, say some, for Neptune; others that it is the 'old Triton blowing his wreathed horn,' so lovingly described by Wordsworth; and some wage assert that it is the proprietor of the ship blowing his own trumpet. The huge bulk of the *Atlantic* was more perceptible by contrast with the steamer—none of the smallest—that was now alongside; for though the latter was large enough to accommodate about four hundred people on deck, yet its funnel scarcely reached as high as the bulwarks of the *Atlantic*. The diameter of the paddle-wheels is 36 feet; and the floats, many of which, split and broken, were lying about in the water, are nearly 15 feet long. The depth of the hold is 31 feet, and the estimated burthen 2860 tons, being about the same as the *Great Britain*,

and about 500 tons more than the ships of the old Cunard Line.

Like all the other Atlantic steamers, the run of the deck is almost a straight line. Around the funnel, and between the paddle-boxes, is a long wooden house, and another is placed at the stern. These contain the state-rooms of the captain and officers; and in a cluster are to be found the kitchen, the pastry-room, and the barber's shop. The two former are, like similar establishments, replete with every convenience, having even a French *maître de cuisine*; but the latter is quite unique. It is fitted up with all necessary apparatus—with glass-cases containing perfumery, &c.; and in the centre is 'the barber's chair.' This is a comfortable, well-stuffed seat, with an inclined back. In front is a stuffed trestle, on which to rest feet and legs; and behind is a little stuffed apparatus like a crutch, on which to rest the head. These are movable, so as to suit people of all sizes; and in this comfortable horizontal position the passenger lies, and his beard is taken off in a twinkling, let the *Atlantic* waves roll as they may. The house at the stern contains a smoking-room, and a small apartment completely sheltered from the weather for the steersman. The smoking-room communicates with the cabin below, so that, after dinner, those passengers so disposed may, without the least exposure to the weather, or annoyance to their neighbours, enjoy the weed of old Virginia in perfection. This smoking-room is the principal prospect of the man at the helm, who, however, has to steer according to his signals. Before him is a painted intimation that one bell means 'port,' and two bells mean 'starboard'; a like intimation appears on the large bell in the bow of the ship; and according to the striking of the bell, so must he steer.

Proceeding below, we come to the great saloon, 67 feet long, and the dining-saloon, 60 feet long, each being 20 feet broad, and divided from each other by the steward's pantry. This pantry is more like a silversmith's shop, the sides being lined with glass-cases stored with beautifully-burnished plate; crockery of every description, well secured, is seen in great quantities; and the neatness of arrangement shows that the gilded inscription, full in the sight of every visitor—'A place for everything, and everything in its place'—has been reduced to practice. Above the tables in the dining-saloon are suspended racks, cut to receive decanters, glasses, &c. so that they can be immediately placed on the table without the risk attendant on carrying them from place to place. The two saloons are fitted up in a very superior manner: rose, satin, and olive are the principal woods that have been used, and some of the tables are of beautifully-variegated marble, with metal supporters. The carpets are very rich, and the coverings of the sofas, chairs, &c. are of the same superior quality. The panels round the saloons contain beautifully-finished emblems of each of the states in the Union, and a few other devices that savour very strongly of republicanism. For example, a young and beautiful figure, all radiant with health and energy, wearing a cap of liberty, and waving a drawn sword, is represented trampling on a feudal prince, from whose head a crown has rolled in the dust. The cabin windows are of beautifully-painted glass, embellished with the arms of New York, and other cities in the States. Large circular glass ventilators, reaching from the deck to the lower saloon, are also richly ornamented, while handsome mirrors multiply all this splendour. The general effect is that of chasteness and a certain kind of solidity. There is not much gilding, the colours used are not gaudy, and there is a degree of elegant comfort about the saloons that is sometimes wanting amid splendid fittings. There is a ladies' drawing-room near the chief saloon full of every luxury. The berths are about 150 in number, leading out, as usual, from the saloons. The most novel feature about them is the 'wedding-berths,' wider and more handsomely furnished than the others, intended for such newly-married couples as wish to spend the first fort-

night of the honeymoon on the Atlantic. Such berths are, it seems, always to be found on board the principal river-steamers in America, but are as yet unknown on this side of the water. Each berth has a bell-rope communicating with a patented machine called the 'Annunciator.' This is a circular plate about the size of the face of an eight-day clock, covered with numbers corresponding with those of the state-rooms. Each number is concealed by a semicircular plate, which is removed or turned round as soon as the rope is pulled in the state-room with the corresponding number. A bell is at the same time struck to call the attention of the stewards, who then replace the plate in its former position, and attend to the summons.

The machinery which propels the ship consists of two engines, each of 500 horse-power, the engines of the old line being also two in number, but only about 400 horse-power each. Such cylinders, and shafts, and pistons, and beams are, I believe, unrivalled in the world. There are four boilers, each heated by eight furnaces, in two rows of four each. The consumption of coal is about fifty tons every twenty-four hours; 'and that,' said one of the engineers, 'is walking pretty fast into a coal-mine, I guess!' According to the calculations of the very wise men who predicted the failure of Atlantic steam navigation, such a vessel as the *Atlantic* ought to carry 3700 tons of coal; but it will be seen that one-fourth of that quantity is more than enough, even making allowance for extra stores to provide against accidents. In the engine-room is a long box with five compartments, each communicating with a wire fastened like a bell-pull to the side of the paddle-box. These handles are marked respectively—'ahead,' 'slow,' 'fast,' 'back,' and 'hook-on'; and whenever one is pulled, a printed card with the corresponding signal appears in the box opposite the engineer, who has to act accordingly. There is thus no noise of human voices on board this ship: the helmsman steers by his bells, the engineer works by the telegraph, and the steward waits by the annunciator.

Two traces of national habits struck me very much. Even in the finest saloon there are, in places where they would be least expected, handsome 'spittoons'—the upper part fashioned like a shell, and painted a sea-green or sky-blue colour—thus giving ample facility for indulging in that practice of spitting of which Americans are so fond. Again, much amusement was caused by the attempt of one of the officers in charge of the communication between the small steamer and the *Atlantic* to prevent the gentlemen from leaving the latter until the ladies had seated themselves on the former. The appearance of the deck, crowded with ladies only, and a host of gentlemen kept back, some impatient to get down, but the greater part entering into the humour of the thing, was quite new to English ideas. It is but fair to add that the ladies did not seem to like it; and that, when the steamer again came alongside, it was not repeated.

Upon the whole, this Atlantic steamer is really worthy of the great country from which she has come. If, in shape and general appearance, she is inferior to the old vessels, she is decidedly equal, if not superior, to them in machinery and fittings. Her powers as regards speed have of course yet to be tried. One voyage is no test, nor even a series of voyages during the summer months: she must cross and recross at least for a year before any just comparison can be instituted. The regular postal communication between Liverpool and the United States will speedily be twice every week—the ships of the new line sailing on Wednesday, and the old on Saturday.

But other ports besides Liverpool are now despatching steamers regularly to America. Glasgow sent out a powerful screw steamer—the *City of Glasgow*, 1087 tons—on 16th April for New York, where she arrived on 3d May; thus making the passage in about seventeen days, in spite of stormy weather and entanglements among ice; the average time taken by the Liverpool

steamers during 1849 being fourteen days. Her return voyage, however, made under more favourable circumstances, was within this average—the distance being steamed between the 18th May and the 1st June. A vessel called the *Viceroy* is about to sail from Galway to New York, and her voyage is looked forward to with considerable interest. The *Washington* and *Hermann* sail regularly between Bremen and Southampton and New York, and the *British Queen* has been put on the passage between Hamburg and New York. All these enterprises seem to indicate that ere long the Atlantic carrying trade will be conducted in steamships, and sailing vessels superseded to as great extent as has been the case in the coasting trade.

#### THE FRENCH POLICE.

Much is heard of the system of French police—its petty regulations with respect to personal movement, its spying into private affairs, and its wide and deep ramifications through society. The perfection which this institution has attained is a result of long experience: first, under a series of despotic monarchs; next, under the republican leaders; and lastly, under the Emperor Napoleon, who was its great consolidator and improver—the curious thing being, that no form of government which the French people adopt ever relieves them in the slightest degree from the trammelling ordinances of their police. Indeed one would be inclined to suppose that the more friendly to liberty any government in France affects to be, the more numerous and vexatious must be its restrictions. But as the French mind is absorbed exclusively in the chase of principles in the abstract, vexations of this sort, which are altogether practical, do not appear to incur public resentment.

Let us take a glance at the more recent history of this extraordinary institution. When the police system was concentrated in the hands of a prefect in 1800, it acquired dignity and power. Dubois was the first prefect, and he showed himself equal to his task. He ordained a vast number of arrangements respecting passports, gambling-houses, lodging-houses, printing, and other matters connected with life and trade in Paris. After this he devoted himself to public improvements, allowing no obstacle to stand in the way of his designs. Dubois was a great man. By the expression of his will, backed by Napoleon, he effected sanitary improvements which would require years of legislative battling in England. The vast sewer, through which an army could march, which runs beneath the Rue St Denis, was his work, hastened on by Napoleon, who one morning astonished the people on the Place du Châtelet by emerging from the bowels of the earth after several hours' journey under ground. Pasquier, who succeeded Dubois in 1810, strove to add to his other acts of utility a thorough reform in the manners of the police, hitherto rude and brutal. For the time being he was successful. He then looked back to the archives, and drew from them every useful inspiration. Public security was never greater, salubrity was rigidly attended to, a council of health was founded, Paris was better lighted, the body of firemen reconstituted, the sale of charcoal regulated, and the capital insured a proper supply of provisions. But Pasquier was a blind instrument of his master; and his persecutions of poets and satirists are not yet forgotten, while Béranger yet smiles at his attempts to discover the authorship of the 'Roi d'Yvetot.' The great Mallet conspiracy to overthrow the Emperor showed how the police could sometimes be caught; but Pasquier escaped the anger of Napoleon, and remained at his post until the Restoration. His care during the excitement of the marriage of Napoleon and Marie-Louise, his energy at the great fire in the Russian embassy, and at the overflow of the Seine in 1813, showed his value as a minister of public order.

The Restoration established a Direction of the Police of the kingdom, and greatly disorganized the whole af-

fair; but when Napoleon's return from Elba alarmed the monarchy, the system was reorganized, and the ministry and prefecture of police were re-established. In 1818 it was united to the home office (*interieur*), to become again 'General Direction' in 1820, and again a department of the interior in 1822. The prefect of the Empire had been a most important functionary. His duty was—to see to the passports, cards of safety, and permissions of residence in Paris; to watch over mendicity and vagabondage; the prisons and Bicêtre; to overlook places of public resort; to prevent crowds; to watch over publications of all kinds; over printing-offices and theatres, and to fix the hours of their closing; over the sale of powder and saltpetre; the regulation of emigrants; the survey of public worship; the bearing of arms; the search after deserters; the public festivals; the licenses of hawkers; the care of the safety and health of the town; the attention to fires, accidents, and floods, and the regulation of the Bourse and money-changers; the safety of commerce; taxes and fines; the free circulation of food; the overseeing of patents and prohibited goods; the survey of every public-house, market, &c.; and the preservation of all monuments. He had under his orders the commissaries of police, officers of peace, the commissaries and inspectors of markets, exchanges, and ports, the spies, gendarmes, and firemen. The functions of the prefect, where authority was arbitrary and despotic, were of the highest importance. From the year 1796 to 1814 there were three eras in police history. The first, that of the Republic, being the police of terrible times, was terrible; that of the Consulate was trivial, and sought to amuse the public mind; that of the Empire was chiefly administrative.

The worst era in the history of the French police is that from 1815 to 1830. The institution was during this time more bitter, more severe, more suspicious, more inquisitorial, because more political, than it had ever been before. Abandoning the interests of the city of Paris for politics, says a historian, 'by the 20th March 1815, it had organized a secret correspondence and spy system of a nature and extent so great, that all social ties and family bonds were broken up, and at its mercy.' It is accused of instigating assassins, getting up plots, inventing treasons; and with too much truth. It succeeded at one time in wrapping in its net twenty-nine peers of France, eighteen generals, and thirty-eight artists, authors, &c. and all on anonymous denunciations. Never was personal liberty so utterly null, while newspapers, books, and plays were kept rigidly free from life and energy; in fact the direction of the police was in the hands of priests, who, from 1789 to 1815, had had little influence in France, and who now made up for lost time.

In 1821, while the prefecture of police was administered by M. Delavau, there were three distinct bodies of police in Paris, each acting as a spy on the other two: first, the police of the palace, taken from all ranks; the police of the Pavillon Marsan, filled by the Jesuits, and spreading through the whole clergy; finally, the police of the prefecture. Each of these three bodies was bound to know the plans, intrigues, and tricks of its rivals. The prefect, not to be behind-hand, and to be never taken aback, was obliged to watch the others as energetically as if they had been enemies of the state. Spies were employed in every class of society; and it was dangerous to utter an unguarded expression even in one's own house. We may give an anecdote relating to this inquisitory system:—Madame Monnier had opened a *salon*, founded under the preceding minister, and kept up because found to be useful. Madame Monnier was a clever woman, and her *salon* was the rendezvous of all the illustrious in arts, letters, capital, arms, law, and of all who liked mixed society. One heard in this place all kinds of theories, schemes, plots, &c. shouted with a loud voice in the centre of a room, round which sat three or four rows of the most lovely women in Paris. In one room music

played; in another, cards were the occupation of men who played high, and whose gambling tastes brought them every night. One evening a regular visitor to the club, and the most energetic in his expression of republican opinions, was accosted on going out by a general of the old imperial army. 'I was delighted to hear you, my dear baron,' said the general; 'you surpassed yourself. The day is not far distant when we shall dismiss the rat at the castle. Preserve your eloquence, dear baron: we shall need it. I say nothing more to you now; but wait a few days, and I will tell you something which will fill you with joy and hope.' They then embraced, and swore, with low voice and clenched teeth, death to the Bourbons, and the whole race of their present governors, and parted. Next morning the prefect of police received a letter from the director of the secret police informing him—while blaming him severely for his want of energy—that he was wanted at the château. He went.

'Well, sir,' said a person of exalted rank then in great favour, 'there are plots in Paris, and you know nothing of them!'

'Indeed, Monsieur the Duke, nothing has come to my ears, and I can promise'—

'Promise nothing until you have read this report.'

The prefect took it, and read it carefully. Having done so, he pulled another out of his pocket, and addressed the duke—'Monsieur, here is its fellow.'

The report of the duke was signed by the baron, that of the prefect by the general! The one denounced a Bonapartist plot—the other a republican. They were agents respectively of the two policies! Each had told on the other. Everybody laughed at the affair as a good joke, though such things were of frequent occurrence.

M. Debelleye, who became prefect of police in 1828, pretty well restored the institution to its original purpose. It ceased to be a political and religious inquisition, and became a machine to survey health, cleanliness, and public safety. M. Debelleye first forced proprietors to make gutters to their houses; for before his time the rain poured in torrents on your head during a shower as you walked the streets. He organized another useful reform. The Duke of Orleans, afterwards Louis-Philippe, had completed the Palais Royal at great expense; the dismal wooden galleries had been replaced by stone arcades, and the shops were gradually becoming the property of the duke. But the shops were disfigured by huge signs, many of which projected a yard, and which spoiled the appearance of the palace. But the duke feared to lose his popularity by interfering, and he went to the prefect of police, whom he soon persuaded to issue a decree with regard to signs, applicable to all Paris, but which was only intended for the benefit of the Palais Royal. The effect was excellent. The establishment of pavement, the planting of trees on the Boulevards and public places, with the *serjens de ville*, or policemen, we owe to M. Debelleye. The sword and cocked-hat, with sometimes a want of civility and good-will, are the chief faults to be found with these *serjens*, otherwise useful. The great advantage was the institution of a police, with uniform, for one secret, and without uniform. The omnibus owes its origin to this energetic prefect. Though, under Louis XIV., coaches at five sous had been tried, they failed, and were only to succeed and be carried out with vigour in 1828. He further made many regulations tending to improve morality and cleanliness.

Passing over the administration of Mangin, and various other prefects, we come to that of Delessert, the last who served under the monarchy of the restored Bourbons. The duties of this personage were extensive and onerous, as may be judged by the following facts:—Paris contains a population of about a million, and costs twelve millions of francs in police expenses. This money supported a body of 2596 infantry soldiers, 647 horsemen, 830 firemen, 300 *serjens de ville*, a number of offices, open day and night, and attended by 300

persons, besides commissaries of police, officers of peace, inspectors, agents of all kinds, comprising about 2000 persons. There were two supreme divisions in the prefecture—one political, the other municipal. The former had lynx-eyes, which pierced the deepest darkness, and watched over plots, conspiracies, and attempts at insurrection; the other, as sharp, was more palpable: the first looked after the interests only of the governors—the latter of the governed. It is even now almost impossible to pierce the veil of the organization of the first, which had no fixed system or rules, was guided by events, and changed its means of action as required. Its agents, unknown to each other, were chiefly men ruined by prodigality or vice; women of beauty and talent, but no longer young, who wanted a safe addition to their income; young men, who feigned ardour they did not feel, and extreme opinions they did not understand, to get gold for their wants, pleasures, or studies. Its resources were boundless. It moved in every circle, from the taproom to the palace-hall; its eyes were everywhere; but the very knowledge of its power sometimes defeated its object, by making conspirators act with extreme caution.

The municipal police was less mysterious. Each *arrondissement* of Paris—and there are fourteen—had a brigade devoted to it, commanded by a peace-officer, and composed of inspectors and *serjens de ville*. Their mission was, to explore every corner of the district, to see to the execution of orders and laws, to prove infractions, to repress disorder, to arrest criminals, and to give aid in all circumstances where it was required. Their duties began in the morning, and lasted until midnight, when the town was given up to other agents, and to the military authorities, who furnished patrols of the line—the National Guard, and municipal guard. As between midnight and dawn the barricades of conspirators were always raised, these patrols were more useful than mere police at this hour. Twice a day a report was sent from the district office to the prefect, who never left his cabinet without knowing the exact presumed state of the capital. One brigade was devoted to watching that the streets were free, while four remained in reserve to aid, in case of need, any district brigade requiring assistance.

The police patrols went through every street during the night, visited low quarters, the houses inhabited by vagabonds and ex-galley slaves. The inspectors of furnished hotels were, and are still, bound to visit the hotels and lodging-houses once at least every day, to inscribe the name of every arrival, with age, profession, &c. on a printed form, which was at once sent to the prefecture of police. In a town where 5000 furnished houses exist, the labour was excessive; and the number of notes sent were annually more than 1,000,000. But it became thus almost impossible for any one to hide in furnished lodgings in Paris. The service of surety surveyed the returned convicts, ex-galley slaves, and other persons of disorderly character; looked after new criminals, and arrested them, and did the whole active duty of a civil police.

In addition, it watched over the supply of provisions to the city, explored the markets, and guarded the river, the navigation of which was under its direction. Seven thousand gas-burners, 12,000 lamps, and thirty leagues of gutters, were daily visited by their eyes. They surveyed the hospitals, prisons, houses of vice of every description; watched over weights and measures; analysed preserved food and liquors. They watched over the tombs of the dead, and kept in order more than 30,000 murderers, thieves, galley-slaves, and other criminals who always infest Paris. They knew their names, slang-names, addresses, crimes, and kept an eye on their every movement. At the prefecture of police are the legal proofs of every condemnation for crime in France during more than a hundred years, so that the preceding life of any accused person can always be traced. There are in and around Paris 6000 establishments, dirty, dangerous, or unwholesome: these this

police surveyed. They provided every means of restoring life in case of accident or attempted suicide.

The importance of the duties of the Paris police will be the better appreciated when we remind our readers that on the peace of the capital depends that of France. M. Delessert did his best, and 200 useful decrees show his desire to do good. He ordered a survey over copper utensils used by cook-shops and others; over coaches let by the hour and day; removed auctions of the sheriff from the street to a handsome building; ordered extreme care in the transport of lucifers and other fulminating articles, which he never allowed to be sent with travellers, or even with other goods; fixed the price of bread anew: this was wanted. Paris has 604 bakers of four classes. The trade is a monopoly. They have to deposit security in the shape of twenty sacks of flour, while they have to keep a fixed stock. The first class, 140 sacks; the second, 110; the third, 80; the fourth, 30. This insures Paris thirty days' bread. Delessert's labours in the Council of Salubrity, and for the reform of the prisons, were most valuable.

The police has little altered since the Revolution. The municipal guard is now called the *Garde Republicaine*, the *serjens de ville* are called *Gardiens de Paris*; but the institution, its mechanism, its plans, its attributes, are scarcely altered. The Republic, while preserving all that is good, admirable, and useful in this remarkable institution, has also kept all that is barbarous, inquisitorial, and arbitrary. The defects of the administration, however, seem scarcely known to the French people, who are habituated to things—such as passports—which to us are intolerable. One thing is clear. However much we may compliment certain prefects for the excellence of their arrangements, it is certain that, with all their ingenuity, they do not prevent private murders and robberies, nor avert insurrections. On the occasion of our last visit to Paris in 1849, we saw the bodies of two men and a boy one morning at the Morgue. They had been assassinated the preceding night. Next day fresh bodies were exhibited. Now of these murders not one word was said in the newspapers of the day. Nobody spoke of them: they seemed to be matters of course. Need we say how differently a single case of homicide would have been treated by the inhabitants of London or any other English town? The truth is, that with all their discoveries in the art of organization, the French have not, till this day, been able to get up a body of plain orderly men, unarmed, to walk about quietly, yet vigilantly, as a police force. The nearest approach they have to a London policeman is their *sergent de ville* or *gardien*. But this gentleman is in a long blue greatcoat down to his heels, with a cocked-hat on his head, and a sword dangling from his pocket-hole. The poor man could not run smartly, for fear of deranging his dignity. He is, in fact, a mere saunterer in the streets. Louis-Philippe, we have heard, projected a police for Paris like that of the British metropolis—that is to say, a body of respectable and active street guardians; but was prevented from carrying the plan into execution in consequence of the jealous unwillingness of the French to copy anything English.

#### LONDON GOSSIP.

May 1850.

THE chief subject of gossip at present, singular as it may appear, is, that there is nothing to talk about; and, in fact, the season has been a dull one in several respects. A sort of expectant fermentation appears to be going on in matters of opinion, as though mind were rousing itself for a start in a new direction; but nothing especially striking displays itself. No grand invention—no notable discovery—nothing beyond what is called the 'prosy development of science.' This, in some shape or other, provokes talk; and I can only give you such incidents and items of news as have come up for discussion in our numerous hebdomadal meetings.



The note of preparation for the assemblage of the British Association in your northern capital is already heard, and it is believed that a goodly number of philosophers from the continent will be present. Some few eminent *avants* have paid us a flying visit, and shown themselves where the learned congregate. One of these is the amiable enthusiast, Dr Guggenbühl, who founded the hospital for crétina on the Abendberg, of which you once gave a lengthened notice. It appears, from a recent Report of the establishment, that its success in treating crétinism and educating the weakened intellects of the patients continues; and Guggenbühl is now engaged chiefly in a mission to promote similar establishments elsewhere. Another of our visitors was M. Quetelet, the secretary of the Royal Academy of Brussels. He had a commission from the Belgian government to examine into the electric-telegraph system of this country. Major Rawlinson, too, has come home from the East, overflowing with results of his philological researches, and has more than once edified the Society of Antiquaries with an account of his labours. The gallant decipherer of cuneiform inscriptions is a candidate for admission into the Royal Society, and will doubtless be elected.

The Horticultural Society have just published their annual Report. Are you aware that it is a standing joke against this floral corporation that they predetermine every year which shall be the three wet days—so frequently does it happen that rain falls on their show-days? and yet, according to their statement, the reverse is the case. 'For many years,' so runs the Report, 'the exhibitions at the garden were accompanied by such constant fine weather, that precautions against rain appeared needless. From 1833 to 1843, a period of eleven years, only two afternoons out of thirty-three were wet, and of these one was very slightly so. In 1845 and 1846 every day was fine; but since that time, the weather in May, June, and July had changed so much, that out of nine meetings in 1847–8–9, five had been more or less stormy. In 1849 one day only proved wet.' In consequence of the unfavourable seasons, precautions are now to be taken to insure dryness. A gravel walk, 630 feet long, and 15 feet wide, has been made in the gardens at Chiswick. Tents are to be erected on each side of this, and, if requisite, an awning will be stretched across from one to the other, so as to afford complete shelter. In 1849, 18,517 tickets were sold; a large increase over the previous year, shown also in receipts augmented by more than L.200. Next to the Derby-day at Epsom there is no event that provokes so much vehicular locomotion among Londoners as the shows of the Horticultural Society.

The subject of weather, here incidentally mentioned, is one which receives much attention in most parts of Europe and the United States. The Royal Irish Academy are about to establish a system of meteorological observations throughout Ireland, in imitation and extension of the one now successfully working in this country. Mr Glaisher, of the Greenwich Observatory, to whom meteorology is much indebted for its present exactitude, considers that we have climatic cycles of about fifteen years; and expressing it by a curve, shows that we have risen to the highest point through a series of hot summers, and are now descending on the other side through a series of cold summers. The ascent and descent occupy each about five years, the remaining period being consumed in a pause at either end of the curve. To a considerable extent this theory is supported by facts, and we may look for farther developments of it; for the corps of careful observers gains daily new accessions, and the reading of an unusual number of papers on meteorology at the meetings of the Royal Society during their present session is an additional proof of its importance. In many parts of the country also medical men invariably watch the changes of the wind as connected with disease; and not without reason, when we remember the Registrar-General's declaration, that a fall of temperature in London from 40 to 30 degrees kills 300 people!

Apropos of the Registrar: his Report for the first quarter of the present year contains statements which are commented on with gratulation in many quarters. Notwithstanding the imperfect attempts that have as yet been made towards sanitation, there is a great improvement in the public health; abundant and cheap food and plenty of work have contributed also towards this favourable result. Marriages, which declined in 1847, and scarcely rose in 1848, numbered '141,599 in the year 1849; and in the autumn quarter were 43,632, which is a higher number than has ever before been celebrated, except in the autumn quarter of 1845.

... The deaths in the first quarter of 1850 were less by 21,065, and 21,414, than the deaths in the corresponding quarters of 1847 and 1848. Fewer children have been left fatherless; fewer parents have been bereaved of their children. Sickness and suffering—though perhaps not precisely in the same ratio as the mortality—have diminished; the skilled and active industry of the kingdom has been less interrupted by the illness of workmen and the incapacity of masters; the parishes have had fewer poor to relieve; insurance societies less to pay on policies; everything dependent on the duration of human life has been relieved of pressure: the minds of the people have not been irritated by hunger, fever, or discontent.'

Another prime cause of amended health has been the equability of temperature and of atmospheric pressure during the past months. The high range of the barometer within the period is indeed remarkable. The births were 45,955 more than the deaths; but in the three months 46,423 emigrants left the kingdom, so that there is no real increase of population. The question of emigration has been talked about at the Statistical Society, and the returns show that from 1822 to 1831 the number of those who expatriated themselves was 291,070; from 1832 to 1841, 738,582; from 1841 to 1848, 985,953; and in the first six months of 1849, 196,973; making a total in the twenty-seven years of 2,212,578. Great as these numbers are, present indications show a tendency to increase rather than to diminish.

The Registrar starts an inquiry in the course of his Report, to which a satisfactory reply would be a fact of the most acceptable kind: it is—How are the population to be fed if the potato crop fails? To some extent, M. d'Hombre Firmas, a foreign naturalist, furnishes a reply. He recommends the young roots of the garden poppy, *Papaver somniferum*, as an agreeable and healthful esculent. He has for a long time used them in his family without inconvenience, served with butter or sugar; and in fricandeaux or giblet pies, or as salad. As a further proof that they may be eaten with impunity, he mentions that in the department du Gard, south of France, women range the fields, and collect roots of the coquelicot, *Papaver rhæas* (*Papaver hybridum*), and carry them by basketfuls to the towns, where they find a ready sale: these, when young, are said to be almost as good as the garden poppy. It is well known that several roots, which are noxious in the raw state, are perfectly nutritious when cooked; and perhaps some of our cultivators, whose lands are infested with poppies, will find it worth while to test the value of this statement.

There is another way, as yet untried, of producing large supplies of food; and in this our tropical colonies might well engage themselves, the rather as steam communication now renders the delivery speedy and certain. I refer to increased culture of the plantain and banana: the former is generally fried for the table in the southern states of America, where it is highly prized as an article of diet; and as regards the banana, there are few vegetable productions which equal it. A single plant of the species *Musa Cavendishii*, given by the Duke of Devonshire to Williams the missionary, and carried out to Navigators' Islands in one of Ward's glazed cases, produced the following year 'nearly 100 lbs. of fruit and thirty young plants,' and now the islands are covered

with them. The yield, in fact, is enormous. 'Humboldt states that a given quantity of land, planted with wheat, produces seventyfold, which will keep a man and his wife for a year; but it would, if planted with bananas, keep fifty persons for a like period. The same quantity of land that would yield 1000 lbs. of potatoes would produce 44,000 lbs. of bananas. This food is so inoffensive and nutritive, that in the interior of Brazil children are fed upon it from birth to maturity, and it is not known to disagree with the digestive organs.' Perhaps some of our over-sea brethren might find better account in attending to these hints than in nursing grievances about unfettered trade.

Talking of trade reminds me of a few particulars which are discussed in commercial circles. The business of plate-glass making and selling, since the removal of those obnoxious Excise duties which devoured more than 40 per cent. of the entire cost, has risen to a pitch of unexampled prosperity. Plates are now made in this country of larger dimensions, finer quality, at less cost, and with more facility, than in any other country in the world. British manufacturers, it is said, realise a profit of 20 per cent.—as much again as is gained by foreigners. The benefits resulting from the substitution of common sense for prejudice in fiscal regulations are shown in a paper read to the Statistical Society by Mr Howard. In 1847 the exports of glass exceeded those of 1846 in the article of flint-glass by 20 per cent.; common window-glass, 42 per cent.; bottles, 5 per cent.; looking-glasses, 49 per cent.; plate-glass, 110 per cent.—the quantity of the latter made weekly within the year being 70,000 feet. 'Again, in 1846, what was the quantity of plate-glass exported to all the United States of America? Not a single foot! while in 1847, when prices had been somewhat mitigated, the exports to the United States alone nearly equalled the total amount exported in 1846 to all the world!'

Another topic connected with what I have already written has also been brought before the society here-in-before-mentioned, as the lawyers have it, in a paper on East India Sugar, by Lieutenant-Colonel Sykes. This sugar is produced not only from canes, but from cocoa, palm, and date-trees; of the last nearly 7,000,000 are planted in the Bengal division alone; and, including other districts, there are 880,000 acres under cane cultivation. The quantity of sugar lately obtained has been 252,000 tons annually, of which 162,000 tons are consumed in the country, the consumption per head of the population being from 2 to 8 lbs. Contrast this with the quantity imported into England in 1849—namely, 776,413,680 lbs.—about 25 lbs. per head. It appears that sugar-growing in India affords a good return: as Colonel Sykes states, 'a capital of 285 rupees, including cost of cultivation, gives a profit of 215 rupees upon 3½ acres of land.' This is at present rather an important question, for, to quote further, 'I cannot conceive that slave labour really can supersede the free labour of India, obtainable to any extent at 6s. per month, all charges included, and land to any extent at 2s. 6d. to 5s. an acre; of which land, in the sugar-growing district of Gorruckpore alone, there are 1,599,586 acres, and in the whole of the north-western provinces above 10,000,000 of cultivable acres at present unappropriated.' What an opening here for enterprising capitalists—that is, provided the East India Company throw no impediments in the way! With advantages such as those above specified, one would imagine that no competition could be feared; but happily commerce knows how to take care of itself when allowed to run without leading-strings.

It seems that my gossip this time is to be of little else than produce in some form or other—I have still something to say about it. Observation has been drawn to the fact, that while the food-raising part of the population has decreased in England and Scotland, it has increased in Ireland. At the census of 1841, it was found that 1000 food-growers in Britain provided enough for themselves and 2984 persons besides; but

1000 similarly employed in Ireland grew food for not more than 511 others. In 1831 there were in England 94,883 farmers of the lowest class, not employing labourers, in a population of 13,000,000; while Ireland, with its 7,700,000 inhabitants, had 564,274 small occupiers. On the other hand, it is shown by a late statistical inquiry in Ireland, that on small farms below thirty acres, the diminution of live-stock between 1841 and 1847 is to be reckoned by hundreds of thousands. I give you the particulars from Mr G. R. Porter's Report. Speaking of pigs, he says, 'On farms not exceeding one acre, the numbers were 295,048 in 1841, and only 19,108 in 1847. On farms from one to five acres, there were 251,587 in 1841, and only 21,422 in 1847. In the next division, between five and fifteen acres, the numbers were 350,825 in 1841, and no more than 80,098 in 1847. Persons holding from fifteen to thirty acres kept in 1841, 215,340, and only 113,864 in 1847; while on farms above that size, the numbers which were 240,301 in 1841, had advanced to 282,984 in 1847. The entire deficiency of this description of stock between the two periods was 835,625, or more than 60 per cent. The diminished number of poultry was 3,378,279 upon 8,834,427, or 40 per cent., which, as in the case of the pigs, applied entirely to the smaller farms. On those above fifteen acres there was an increased number, amounting to 1,048,974, showing that the lessened number on the smaller farms was 4,427,253. The lessened number of pigs is clearly referable to the failure of the food upon which those animals are usually kept in the cabins of the peasantry; and as regards poultry, it could hardly be expected that a starving people should continue to rear things so easily convertible into food, or into that which would procure food for the owners. These facts, which are proved beyond controversy by the inquiries of the Irish government, place in a very conspicuous light the disadvantage of peasant-holdings, as compared with farms which, from their extent, require to be cultivated by persons who, possessing some capital, are not driven, on the occurrence of the first calamitous season, to measures destructive of their own future prosperity, and injurious to the public at large.'

Every question, it is often said, has two sides; and arguments are brought forward by certain parties to prove that crime, and consequently suffering, increases as small holdings diminish. Who shall decide when doctors disagree? But I must leave this topic, or you will grow weary of it; and out of a large heap of scientific and philosophical chit-chat I can only, in drawing to a close, give you a few miscellaneous items. Projects are afoot for steam communication between Galway and New York; for an electric telegraph from St Petersburg to London; for a stationary balloon over Paris, which is to sustain an electric sun for illuminating the city at night; and a scheme has been propounded for a railway of 20 feet gauge to Liverpool from London, in as direct a line as possible, with no short curves. The carriages to be 200 feet in length, divided into floors or decks as a ship, the lowest for luggage, and to comprise refreshment-rooms, pay-office, &c. The different floors would accommodate different grades of passengers. With such a construction, no stations, and consequently no clerks, would be required on the line—nothing more than a stepping-off platform. The highest fare to be twopenny a mile, and the journey to occupy not more than four hours. The scheme sounds well; whether it

it find supporters remains to be proved. It is proposed to plant trees on the slopes of the South-Wales Railway cuttings: you may perhaps remember my suggesting the conversion of these neglected surfaces into strawberry beds; speculators may choose between the two, remembering always that in twenty-five years the trees will pay a handsome annual profit. Besides these matters, a new kind of bath has been contrived by a working

\* It would probably be objected by one of the patrons of peasant-holdings, that Ireland, from its wretched system of tenures and leaseings, is not a fair instance from which to draw an inference.  
—Ed.

shipwright, which can be used on seas, rivers, or ponds at pleasure. It is a boat, with part of the bottom made to lower to any suitable depth by means of a windlass worked by a man who rows, while a curtained enclosure affords the necessary privacy. A paper, by Mr Higginbottom of Nottingham, has just been read at the Royal Society, which deprives sanitary reformers of a telling argument. This gentleman has clearly proved that tadpoles, when kept in the dark, will turn into frogs; hitherto the evidence has been, that light was essential to the process. The Royal Institution announce their Actonian prize of £100 for 1851, for an essay on the Wisdom and Beneficence of the Almighty, as regards the Physiology of Hearing, Seeing, Tasting, Smelling, &c. to be sent in before December 31 of the present year. And last, I cannot help calling your attention to some interesting remarks made by the president of the Cornwall Geological Society, Sir Charles Lemon, at their late anniversary, on the occasion of a paper having been presented to the body by a new contributor. The subject was, 'On the Fossiliferous Rocks of the Liskeard District,' and he said—'I cannot feel satisfied merely to lay it on your table without any remark on the singular character and position of its author. At present I know no more of him than that his name is Giles, and that he is in business as a shoemaker at Liskeard; but I have no doubt that the communication now opened with him will lead on to more, and that we shall find in him a most valuable coadjutor. The paper which you are about to hear read shows how much may be done even with small opportunities, and how wide is the field of science, which includes men of all classes. Mr Giles is not the first Cornishman whose thoughts have been ripened amongst the sedentary occupations of a shoemaker. But Mr Drew found the materials of his speculations at hand—in his own mind: Mr Giles, on the contrary, had to seek them far off; and it is astonishing with how much energy and discrimination he seems to have conducted his search amongst the strata of his own neighbourhood. The vigour of his mind might have done much for him, but he could not have made the use which he has made of his observations without a knowledge of books, which it is hard to conceive how he could have obtained. Altogether, we see in him qualities which are valuable to science; and I trust that we shall find him a frequent contributor to our publications and museum.'

#### MR EMERSON ON ENGLAND.

THE following complimentary observations on England and the English were lately made by Mr Emerson in the course of a lecture delivered in New York. Our extract is from a paper called the 'New York Literary World':—

'The lecturer stated that a year and a-half ago he returned from his second visit to England, and the question now to be answered was, "Why England was England?" On landing at Liverpool, everything struck him as perfect and complete. The highest cultivation met his eye in everything. It seemed the kingdom and chosen home of common sense. The fields and gardens looked so smooth and neat, that they seemed to have been finished with the pencil rather than the plough. You rode at three times the speed, and with three times the ease, and three times the comfort, you do in this country. Over rivers and through ravines, and through tunnels three miles long, you are carried from place to place as if riding on a cannon-ball. You are surrounded with every form of convenience and luxury; your material wants are provided for in a style of artistic perfection. Masters of all kinds wait on you. Herschel and Faraday investigate for you; Stephenson made the engine that carries you; Wheatstone the telegraph at your service; Macready acts for you; the "Times" brings the gossip and news of the world for you; and Soyer cooks. In London you are surrounded with luxury and convenience, and for a few shillings paid to a private citizen, you are served as a monarch would be served, and surrounded by an air of stability and comfort which all the monarchs in the world could not buy. When

an American first puts his foot upon English ground, he seems to have come back to some long-forgotten home: the pictures of his childhood are here in reality. He sees the same ruddy, happy, portly, benignant, grandfatherly Englishmen whose portraits he studied on the tiles in the chimney-corner at home. He has got back among his friends, and finds his uncles, aunts, cousins, and grandfathers on the spot to meet him. The porter, the coachman, the guard, every one he sets his eye on, bears the plump, stalworth, upright look of those pictures.

'England has cause to boast of her choicely-cultivated population. No people on earth can compare with her in this respect. In the midst of all her social evils, all her poverty, all her crime, we see a larger number of well-developed human beings, highly-finished men, rounded, complete, consummate characters in this sphere, of which any nation might well be proud.

'If we look for the causes of this remarkable flowering forth of humanity, we must ascribe a great influence to the climate, never at any time so inclement, either by heat or cold, as to suspend labour. Every day is a working-day. There is no winter to break off the operations of industry. Another reason is, they come of a good stock. The cross between the Britons and the Saxons was a fortunate one, and after that, the northern nations (the Normans) poured their best stamina into the constitutions of the English. This blending of races has produced a physical vigour and perfection that may be looked for elsewhere in vain. The English, as a general rule, weigh more, are better proportioned, more florid, and handsomer, than any other people. You see this in all classes, from the peer to the porter. The dress of the English is emblematic of their character. In the well-dressed Englishman, he is encased in his clothing as in a shell, and looks the picture of defiance; but there is nowhere such a variety of costume. Every one dresses as he pleases, irrespective of any one else. A man washes, and shaves, and wears his hair to suit himself, and not others. He may put on a coat, or a wig, or a shawl, or a saddle, and wear it, and no one will remark upon it. He has his own way, and does not annoy others.

'The Englishman is remarkable for his pluck. He is what a gentleman described his horse to be—all mettle and bottom. They all have it—the Duke of Wellington has it—the bishops have it—the "Times" has it. The "Times" is said to be the pluckiest paper in Europe. The Englishman shows you that he means to have his rights respected. He knows just what he wants, and means to have it. He is sure to let it be known if he is not served to his mind. Still, he is not quarrelsome, and if he boasts, he has something to boast of. Among the twelve hundred men at Oxford, a duel was never heard of. This self-possession is not pugnacity. He does not wish to injure others; he is thinking only of himself.

'With such a sturdy population, England is not likely to break up; though I am aware, when speaking of this subject, it is customary to speak of England as in its decline. Such is not the case. She now contains the essential elements of growth. London will soon fill Middlesex. The British Museum is not yet arranged—its catalogue of books reaches only through the letter A; the National Gallery is too small to hold the pictures; the Nelson Monument is just finished; and the new Houses of Parliament are verging to completion, with their Victoria Tower, which is to shoot up 400 feet into the sky. The London University is adding to its size with a rapidity similar to our own growing colleges in the West, and towns are starting up as rapidly as Brooklyn. Birkenhead was alluded to, though lately it had received a check; and when Mr Emerson was in England, the country was in a ferment, and in some cases seen under unfavourable circumstances. Mr Emerson then alluded to many of the wonders he saw. But it would require some art akin to photography to give every illustration the lecturer gave. Every Englishman, he said, carried about him an atmosphere of his own, and they hence were said to be a reserved people, and he gave an amusing quotation from a French author. You were as if you were not, unless introduced, and even then the man looked coldly enough, though he was thinking all the while how he should serve you best; but when his door was opened, you were at home. He, the lecturer, had never met with such attention. He said it was an old opinion that the English did not like foreigners, and quoted old authors in proof; but we think a prejudice of this kind is fast wearing away in England. Nicholas of Russia, the

greatest despot in Europe, was some months in England, and was not even hissed. And are not the Pole and the negro, ay, and the Hungarian and the Frenchman, received with open arms when their country drives them out? Ten millions were given freely to Ireland; nor did they ever expel workmen, like the French at the late Revolution. Does this show dislike to foreigners? The lecturer said the presence of a superior class gives a tone to their general manners, every trifle being clothed with importance. Whatever is done, must be done in the best way (proverbially the cheapest in any case). The English character thus gains an admirable balance of qualities, resembling, in its keenness and vigour, the best-tempered steel. The fabulous St George was not the true emblem of the national character. He saw it rather in the lawgiver, scholar, poet, mechanic, monarch, Alfred; in later times, in Cromwell; and in one not so well known, William of Wykeham, the builder of Windsor Castle, a bishop of Winchester, a putter down of abuses in his time in his own diocese. He founded a school at Winchester for seventy scholars for ever; he endowed a college at Oxford for seventy fellows for ever; and he established a house in the neighbourhood of Winchester to provide a measure of beer and a sufficiency of bread to every one who asked it for ever; and when Mr Emerson was in England, he was curious to test this good man's credit, and he knocked at the door, preferred his request, and received his measure of beer and his quantum of bread, though its donor had been dead seven hundred years!

If the foregoing be a correct abstract, it would seem that the lecturer touched but lightly on what we consider to be one of the most striking characteristics of the English—namely, their singular liberality as respects strangers who settle in their country. They are utterly indifferent who their neighbours may be—Scotch, Irish, French, Christian, Turk, or Jew, it is all the same; the only thing they look to is, whether a man pays his way, and conducts himself properly. The charity, public and private, extended by the English towards strangers is in itself remarkable. Nor does this feeling of kindness soon cool—so much the reverse, that it becomes a national fault. At this moment the finances of the country are actually charged with charitable disbursements towards the descendants of French families exiled in consequence of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes!

#### RIDICULE.

I know of no principle which it is of more importance to fix in the minds of young people than that of the most determined resistance to the encroachments of ridicule. Give up to the world, and to the ridicule with which the world enforces its dominion, every trifling question of manner and appearance: it is to toss courage and firmness to the winds to combat with the mass upon such subjects as these. But learn, from the earliest days, to insure your principles against the perils of ridicule: you can no more exercise your reason, if you live in the constant dread of laughter, than you can enjoy your life, if you are in the constant terror of death. If you think it right to differ from the times, and to make a stand for any valuable point of morals, do it, however rustic, however antiquated, however pedantic it may appear—do it, not for insolence, but *seriously and grandly*—as a man who wore a soul of his own in his bosom, and did not wait till it was breathed into him by the breath of fashion. Let men call you mean, if you know you are just; hypocritical, if you are honestly religious; pusillanimous, if you feel that you are firm: resistance soon converts unprincipled wit into sincere respect; and no after-time can tear from you those feelings which every man carries within him who has made a noble and successful exertion in a virtuous cause.—*Rev. Sydney Smith.*

#### TRUE CHIVALRY.

No more in knightly tournament  
May lover proudly bear  
The silken scarf or emblem flower  
Bestowed by lady fair.  
No longer must the fatal lance  
Her spotless honour prove,  
Nor high hearts stilled the offering be  
Of chivalry to love.

No more beyond the rolling deep  
Must true love prove its faith,  
By bearing in its sacred name  
A talisman of death.  
No more must glory's wreath be won  
Where death and danger meet,  
Nor sword incarnardined in gore  
Be laid at beauty's feet.

But in life's bloodless battle-field  
To take a nobler stand,  
To strive for victory among  
The wisest of our land—  
By prowess of the mind and heart  
To gain a loftier place—  
Be *these* the guerdon of his truth  
Who seeks a lady's grace.

To *slay* be not your gauntlets flung,  
Ye heroes of the list!  
Nor till your foe be quite o'erthrown  
The gallant strife desist.  
A field more dread and glorious  
No'er chivalry could meet,  
And smiles of spirit loveliness  
Your victory will greet.

C. T.

#### SOCIALIST SUCCESS IN FRANCE AND THE PROSPERITY OF THE WORKING-CLASSES.

One of the most striking proofs of the effects of the Socialist success is found in the condition of the savings' banks of Paris. In all the weeks of January and February confidence prevailed; the artisans and shopkeepers were tolerably well employed—they could save something, and, relying on the government, they invested their savings. In the second week in March the deposits fell to nearly half the amount of the first week in February, and in the third week of March they declined nearly one-third more. As there was a prospect of the success of those who claim for themselves exclusively the character of the workman's friends, the workman's wages dwindled away, and his savings were lessened. When the workman's friends actually succeeded, those effects were augmented, work was almost suspended, and saving almost ceased—adding to the many proofs afforded by every page of modern history, that none suffer so much by political disturbances and revolutions as those on whose behalf they are said to be made. The usual pretext for them is the distress of the labourers, and in all cases they increase that distress. They suspend productive industry; and if the capitalist lose his profit, and the landowner his rent, the labourer loses his wages, and becomes a pauper or starves. He may, by the suspension of his industry, cease to benefit others, but he infallibly ruins himself. The politicians who claim to be the friends of workmen, and are continually planning political changes to serve them, are their worst enemies.—*Economist.*

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C. T.

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